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Operation Quickfind stipulations less stringent than Amber Alert

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CEDAR RAPIDS - The requirements for an Amber Alert are more stringent than those for the Quickfind alerts issued by the Cedar Rapids Police Department.

In Operation Quickfind alerts, police send out faxes to local media about a missing child, a missing disabled person or any other missing person for whom a police commander decides an alert is appropriate. The person must have been missing less than 12 hours for such an alert to be used. The person responsible for the missing individual may opt not to have the information sent to local media through the project.

Last year, Cedar Rapids police received reports of 388 missing children. Most have far happier conclusions than Jetseta's case.

One example:

Last fall, the Iowa State Patrol joined in looking for a 9-year-old boy missing from his home in Atkins, a Benton County town of 900 about 10 miles west of Cedar Rapids. The boy's family had last seen him shooting basketball in his home's driveway. But when they called for him, he didn't respond. Family members looked for him, couldn't find him and started to worry. They called for help. Neighbors and volunteer firefighters joined in the search. Iowa State Patrol trooper Mike Austin showed up to help. Patrol Sgt. Bob Cox told Austin to check the house. The boy's father told Austin he'd be wasting his time because the house had been searched. Austin looked anyway. He found the boy asleep, under a blanket, under a bed.

Most of the time, Cox said, children are found. It's not uncommon to find them somewhere in their homes. One time, a child was hiding in the attic. "Most of the time, there is no foul play," Cox said of missing children reports. "You always look at the simplest outcome first before jumping to conclusions. Sometimes people, especially family, are so panic-stricken they aren't thinking very clearly."

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